

GOD WORKS ADVERSITY FOR GOOD - Part 1 - Acts 22:23-24 – October 25th, 2009

- Soon after the Apostle Paul arrives in Jerusalem, knowing ahead of time what peril faced him there, he's arrested by the Roman Guard.
- Actually, he's taken into protective custody because of a false rumor about him by a mob that starts a riot and wants to try and kill him.
- On the steps of the Antonia Fortress, he asks for and is granted permission to speak to this mob, and, you might say it doesn't go well.
- The mob is so angry that they want the "earth rid of him." Suffice it to say, the beloved Apostle Paul is in the midst of terrible adversity.
- The good news is that this adverse and difficult situation will not have the final word in Paul's life and ministry, as we'll see in the text.
- This is part one of a teaching titled; "God can work Adversity for Good." We'll see several ways in which the Lord does this for Paul.

1. In our pain and suffering (Verses 23-24)

- v23 The mob shouts, throws off their cloaks and fling dust in the air in anger at Paul saying Gentiles and Jews get saved the same way.
- v24 The commander has Paul taken into the barracks to be flogged and interrogated in order to find out why the mob is so mad at him.
- This form of interrogation inflicted unspeakable pain and suffering making it so cruel that the one flogged either confessed or died.
- This kind of adversity isn't foreign to the Paul. He was no stranger to being whipped, stoned, and imprisoned at the hands of angry men.
- I would venture to say that he may have seen pain and suffering as a litmus test of sorts, by which to know that he was doing God's will.
- Woven throughout the fabric of Paul's writings we see threads of how he expected this and knew God's kingdom was furthered in this.

Romans 8:16-17 16 The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. 17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. 18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. NIV

2 Corinthians 1:3-7 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. 5 For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. 6 If we are distressed, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which produces in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we suffer. 7 And our hope for you is firm, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our comfort. NIV

Ephesians 3:13 I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory. NIV

Philippians 3:10 I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, NIV

2 Thessalonians 1:4-6 4 Therefore, among God's churches we boast about your perseverance and faith in all the persecutions and trials you are enduring. 5 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. NIV